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ABSTRACT

Over an 8-month period, a preschool teacher's aide designed and implemented a practicum study intended to improve the social skills of preschoolers in a private day care center. Lesson plans for teaching seven social skills through problem solving were created. Skills were related to entering and exiting activities without disrupting them; resolving conflict through negotiation; sharing equipment and toys; taking turns in conversation; refraining from foul or abusive language; and using polite expressions. Children were given a problem situation in the form of a story and were asked how they would behave if they were a character in the story. Teachers and children engaged in role playing in order to demonstrate prosocial behavior. Other interventions were: provision of a reason for expected behavior; direct instruction; practice; prompting; modeling; reviewing; structuring of the environment; encouragement; and large group, small group, and individualized instruction. Evaluation data indicated that outcomes were positive. Participants enjoyed the process of role playing and solving problems with varied approaches. More than three out of four observed behaviors revealed prosocial characteristics. Positive means of achieving prosocial behavior replaced previously used punitive and corrective means. Measures, examples of lessons for each objective, and other related materials are appended. (RH)

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A Program to Improve the Social Skills of Preschool Children at a Private Day Care Center Through a Problem Solving Approach

Roger T. Winer

Cluster 25

A Practicum II Report Presented to the Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Nova University

1990

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This practicum took place as described.

Verifier: Carolyn Schaeffer
Carolyn Schaeffer

Owner / Director
Title

245 N.W. 11th St.
Address
Pompano Beach, Florida 33060

May 9, 1990

This practicum report was submitted by Roger T. Winer under the direction of the advisor listed below. It was submittedd to the Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova University.

Approved:

May 31, 1990
Date of Final Approval of Report

Georgiana Lowen, Ed.D, Advisor
Georgiana Lowen, Ed.D, Advisor

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Appreciation is expressed to my advisor, Dr. Lowen, whose patience and understanding made the completion of this task most pleasurable. Through her criticism and directions, the practicum project flowed quickly and smoothly with a minimum of discouraging moments.

Special thanks is offered to the staff and director of the day care center where the practicum was implemented. Their efforts contrubuted to our success.

Appreciation is also expressed to my daughter, Lisa, who played quietly and obediently while her Daddy worked at the word processor completing his education. It is hoped that one day she will derive some benefit from her personal sacrifice.

ABSTRACT

A Program to Improve the Social Skills of Preschool Children at a Private Day Care Center Through a Problem Solving Approach
Winer, Roger T., 1990; Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood; Descriptors: Basic Skills; Behavior Change; Classroom Environment; Day Care; Early Childhood Education; Early Experience; Interpersonal Competence; Nursery Schools; Play; Preschool Children; Preschool Education; Preschool Experience; Preschool Programs; Social Behavior; Social Development; Socialization; Social Skills; Young Children;

The practicum was designed to improve the social skills of preschool children at a private day care center. The goal was for the children at the day care center where the practicum was implemented to demonstrate prosocial behavior without prompting or other help from the teacher.

The writer created lesson plans for teaching seven social skills through problems solving. The children were presented with a problem situation in the form of a story. They were asked how they would behave if they were one of the people in the story. Both teacher and children engaged in role playing to demonstrate prosocial behavior.

The results of the practicum were positive. Both teachers and children enjoyed the process of solving problems with varied approaches, and the role playing. More than three out of four observed behaviors demonstrated prosocial behavior. Most importantly, positive means of achieving prosocial behavior replaced more punitive and corrective measures.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of the Community

The private day care center in which the practicum was implemented was in a resort town near the Atlantic Ocean in the southeast part of the United States. Accessibility to the center was excellent, with two major highways, a railroad and a bus depot within one mile of the location. There were several large shopping centers and industrial parks within walking distance from the center, providing a number of opportunities for employment. There was a high school, a middle school and two elementary schools within one mile of the center. There were predominantly single, one story homes in the area and several apartment buildings. The vast majority of the structures were quite old and in poor condition. Recently, construction was begun in both the industrial and residential areas. Industrial parks were expanding and there was a new, small, residential area of middle priced homes under construction. A development

of low cost apartments was recently completed near the center.

The community was comprised mostly of Black Americans, Haitians, Jamaicans, and few Hispanics. The socio-economic picture for the community was bleak. Unemployment among the male population was very high despite the many opportunities available. The crime rate was among the highest in the area. The community was known as "crack city". Student involvement with drugs was notorious, even at the elementary school level. American born children raised in a two parent home were the exception. Nearly all Haitian and Jamaican children lived in two parent homes with both parents employed. Many of the employed had several jobs, each of which was at the minimun wage level.

The educational situation of the children was critical. The dropout rate was high. Many who stayed in school lacked even the most fundamental skills. One of the nearby elementary schools reported the lowest scores in reading and math in the county. The average child entered the middle school reading two full years below grade level. There were thirteen year old children in the community still in the elementary schools.

The Writer's Work Setting

The day care center in which the practicum was

implemented was five years old. Initially there were just five children ranging in age from infancy to five years. As the need grew and the opportunity for federally guaranteed financing became available, a separate facility was acquired. To keep abreast of demand, there were two separate facilities. The one where the practicum was implemented held about 50 children ranging in age from about 2.5 years to about 6.5 years. The younger children were in a nearby separate facility which held about 25 children. The enrollment changed from time to time, because several of the parents were migrant farm workers. When the enrollment was up, the two year olds were moved to the facility with the younger children, where there was more room (see Appendix A for complete list by age group).

The building was an old house which was built more than 20 years ago. Appropriate modifications were made when it was converted for day care. It was a one story, block building on a very busy road. Noise from the trucks that passed by was distracting inside when quiet time was desired. Sound became a significant factor because the floors were tile with only small area carpets where children could sit. Sounds echoed. The interior was extremely clean, orderly, and freshly painted. The

exterior had a fenced in grass and sand play area. While none of the equipment the children used was new, it was in good condition.

Among the staff of five full time teachers, only one was a regular, state certified elementary school teacher. Each of the other teachers met only the minimum requirements for day care teacher in the county. All are parents but none had a child in attendance at the center. One teacher was a new employee. The most experienced had been at the center for about two years. By industry standands, staff turnover was about average.

The Writer's Role and Responsibility

The writer's role was that of an aide to the regular full time teachers at the center. There was opportunity to work with each of the age groups. Responsibilities included dispensing materials, helping to organize group game time, accompanying groups to and from the outdoor facilities, supervising snack and mealtime activities, explaining and demonstrating how materials were to be used and not used, reading and telling stories to individuals and groups, and some record keeping activities.

When the practicum was implemented, it was the writer's responsibility to communicate to each of the teachers how and when each of the objectives was to be met,

demonstrate how the observation checklist was to be used, and to resolve any problems which might arise that were related to the practicum implementation through both individual conferences and staff meetings.

The writer's educational background included an undergraduate degree in music, a master's degree in education, and graduate study in school administration and supervision. Work experience included teaching grades K-6 and substituting in music and physical education in grades 7-12; teaching learning disabled students in grades 3-5; remedial math teacher for grades 3-5; supervising student teachers in grades 4-6; K-8 administration and seven years restaurant management. Day care experience included one year as teacher aide in a private day care center.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Description of the Problem Situation

In the day care center in which the practicum was implemented, one of the goals was to prepare each child for the elementary school experience. This means that it was imperative that the children learn the appropriate mode of behavior so they would function effectively in school. To function effectively each child must acquire certain social skills and practice them. At the day care center where the practicum was implemented, few of the children demonstrated that they had the social skills necessary to succeed in school.

It was felt by most of the teachers at the day care center that the behavior required at school was quite different from the behavior that was being practiced in their homes. The new mode of behavior had to be learned and practiced by the child. Specifically, each child had to become aware that he or she was part of a group. This effected a change in method of communication with both other students and the teacher. Each had to learn to request

teacher's attention appropriately; move as a group from one area or activity to another; accept directions given to a group; move in and out of on-going activities; handle conflict; engage in activities that were approved by the teacher; share in the limited facilities; respect the rights and space of others; and refrain from inappropriate language. There were, of course, other objectives, but most were ancillary to those listed here. While it was understood that each child should feel unique and special, because they are unique and special, for success in school it was essential that they be aware that they were part of a group and must consider the needs of the group (in most situations) above their own desires. Ostensibly, they must conform to a mode of behavior that was foreign, even uncomfortable, to them.

Based on the perspective described here, it was felt that to allow individual freedom to fulfill personal wishes was inappropriate and not conducive to the concept of group membership and the precipitating behavior. Children moved from one area to another in straight lines in complete silence. The noise level at the center was very low.

The ambience at the center could be most accurately described as oppressive. While this statement may fairly be described as a value judgement, there are several bases for the statement. First, there was a clear absence of tolerance for "deviant" behavior. Those who transgressed were immediately and harshly reprimanded, before their peers. For a reprimand to be accompanied by a smack was not unusual. Whether this is effective or not is not germane, here. It is, however, a clear impingement upon the self-concept and personal dignity of the child. Second, observation of children at other day care centers engaged in productive enterprise, e.g., satisfying one's innate curiosity, leads one to conclude that there may be an appropriate noise level that reflects the normal functioning of children "at work" that exceeds the level of silence. Third, one cannot help but question the priorities and procedures at the center. Is silence and a high degree of order paramount? Incontrovertibly, if oppression stiffles the pursuit of natural curiosity, the underlying philosophy demands further consideration.

Despite punitive measures inappropriate behavior still

persisted. Children continued to use foul language and fight to resolve conflicts. They did not share, did not say "thank you, excuse me", etc., and would not wait their turn.

The problem was that the children at the day care center where the practicum was implemented did not demonstrate that they knew the appropriate social skills necessary to succeed in school.

Documentation of the Problem

In order to document the problem described in the previous section, several steps were taken. A questionnaire was given to each of the five teachers to complete and return (see Appendix B for a sample questionnaire). The results of this needs assessment were tabulated and reveal unanimous agreement that improvement in social skills was of great importance at the day care center. The following are the tabulated results of the needs assessment:

Table 1

Summary of Needs Assessment Questionnaire

Item #:	Total Response From Five Teachers:
1.Physical Development: Coordination, Balance, etc.	0
2.Separation from Parents:	2
3.Physical Health: Diet, Nutrition, etc.	1
4.Readiness for Reading, Math, etc.	1
5.Social Skills: Sharing, Waiting turn, etc.	5
6.Child Abuse: Physical or Psychological	0
7.Sex Abuse:	0
8.Other: (Foul Language)	1

A follow-up interview was conducted with each of the teachers. It was made clear by each teacher that the problem was not being ignored and that everything possible was being done to improve the situation. Inappropriate behavior was never ignored, and infractions were dealt with

immediately with punitive action. Despite their efforts undesirable behavior persisted.

Analysis of the Problem

The children at the day care center where the practicum was implemented displayed behavior which was inconsistent with the desirable behavior expected of them. It had been expressed by the staff that the social skills necessary for success in school were lacking. Punitive efforts to mitigate the problem had, at best, met with limited success. Response to infractions had been swift, firm, and consistent, yet it had failed to effect a change in behavior. In many instances desired behavior was practiced only after punishment had been meted out, only to have the undesired behavior repeated. Children were reluctant to share, compromise, practice social graces, show respect, and refrain from physical confrontations and vulgarity.

The desired behavior was not practiced in the homes or in the streets. There were few positive role models for the children to follow. Many children saw the desired behavior as strange or foreign. Behavior which was practiced at home or out of school was met with rejection

at the day care center, and the children had been unable to make appropriate adjustments. There was an abundance of negative role models. Children were hit for hitting others. Outside of school, possessions were taken by bigger people. Many of the parents were into drugs and out of child rearing. T.V. provided copious examples of crimes of violence. Foul language was an accepted, integral part of the language in the homes and in the streets. Alternative methods needed to be employed to effect the needed change in children's behavior so that punitive measures could be reduced, at least, and preferably eliminated.

Relationship of the Literature to the Problem

In order to help solve the problem of inappropriate social behavior, the literature was reviewed. Several issues needed to be examined. One needed to look to the literature to determine whether social skills could, in fact, be taught. If the response was affirmative one must determine whether it was appropriate to teach the skills at the preschool level. It must be determined, for example, whether children at the preschool level were capable of

some degree of mastery of the skills involved in the fine art of negotiation.

Attention was focused on what others in the field thought, and what some had done, in order to provide greater understanding of the problem and its possible resolution.

Grusec and Schenk (1987) report that children with day care experience were more outgoing and more open in expressing themselves than children with no day care experience. The day care children also had a tendency to ignore adults more often, perhaps as a result of having greater peer interaction. They apparently "tune in" to peer needs and "tune out" to adult needs.

Day care children, reports Clarke-Stewart (1982), have been found to be more vocal and aggressive and show less consideration to others. They have also, however, been found to be more sure of themselves, outgoing, more independent, more competent at dressing and choice selection, and more competent in relations with strangers.

More optimistic regarding the effects of day care on socialization, Hatch (1987) feels that in day care settings children interact with each other in an attempt to learn how

to handle new social situations effectively. They become more competent than those who only interact with adults.

Day care children experience separation from mother earlier than children who are not in day care. Because they were not socialized under parental guidance, day care children are anti-social, asserts Levine (1987).

Calhoun (1981), however, feels the causes of anti-social behavior are "overcrowding, flexibility of life styles and the reduction of nuclear families". He suggests teacher designed programs and teacher made objectives.

When children are uncertain about appropriate behavior, they will try to find someone with whom they can interact to test their own behavior. In other words, Chafel (1984) explains, a child will learn more quickly from another child than from an adult. He calls these "social reality checks".

Studies seem to indicate that capacity for social learning develops much earlier than developmentalists believe. After observing four groups of children, Golden (1987) concludes that prosocial behavior can not only be taught, but it is natural for young children. Prosocial

environments must be free of "punitive and judgemental" adults.

Curtis (1987) reveals what many mothers of young children have believed for years. Children learn social skills from birth to about age three primarily from their family. These skills are often different from those taught at day care centers, in many cases. It is behooving to the children if the teacher provides opportunity for social interaction free of adult intervention. This will help the children learn "to cooperate, make concessions, assert themselves, and gain appreciation of group dynamics". Curtis (1987) lists three critical social skills necessary for social survival. Children must learn how to enter an on going activity, function within the group, and exit the activity in a socially acceptable way.

Similarly, preschoolers observed by Ditchburn (1988) demonstrated " conflict management through de-escalation" in play activities. Because conflict and stress are both ubiquitous in our society, conflict management is important for children to learn even at the preschool level.

Honig (1986) also feels that a curriculum for pro-social behavior for young children is needed. They must be taught the necessary skills before they can reason, share with others, and demonstrate appropriate social skills.

Anger on the part of the teacher is considered by Bullock (1988) to be the major problem in dealing with aggressive children. Teachers must be aware of the nature of aggression. "Accidental aggression" may result from interaction between children. The cause of aggression must be understood before the teacher responds to the child.

Modeling is emphasized by Langenbach and Nescora (1977) as the method employed by all cultures to teach children social skills. They caution teachers to be aware of the negative role models from television. In many cases these role models affect children more than real life teacher or parent models. A common example of negative role model occurs when the teacher points out poor behavior.

Children at three day care centers were observed by Schindler (1987) who concluded that peer interaction is a cogent factor in social development. Teachers need to be aware of other factors that influence social

development, e.g., potential interaction with other age groups, size of class, and nature of classroom structure.

Sharing is considered by Bryant and Budd (1984) to be the quintessential skill for learning interactive play. Research seems to indicate that sharing is a natural occurence in play which usually results in prosocial responses from others. Skills needed by children include offering to share, requests to share, acceptance and refusal.

Teachers are advised by Foster (1979) to be aware that when skills and attitudes learned at home are consistent with those learned at school, all of those experiences will facilitate the learning process. Otherwise, it becomes most difficult for the child to assimilate the culture transmitted at the school. The relationship between the child and teacher is also a significant factor in the learning of social skills.

Elkind (1989) makes the point that the methods used to teach children effect both cognitive and social

development. He recommends both multi-age grouping for social development and developmentally appropriate curriculum for cognitive development.

Similarly, Eastman (1989) feels that at age three social training should begin. Conscience, cause and effect, and social awareness all become viable earlier than many expect. She cautions against replacing real life relationships with T.V. experiences. The relationship between child and teacher is an important one. They need to experience the real world rather than to be taught about it.

Young children are developmentally ready, according to Goffin (1987), to be taught the social skills. Current research seems to indicate that learning social skills is a cognitive process. Children need to learn to understand another's perspective. It is for the teacher to create an environment that is conducive to cooperative behavior, then to support prosocial behavior.

Innocenti and Schulze (1989) recommend that parents teach social skills to children at home, as situations arise. It is most effective when teaching occurs during natural situations. Childrens' learning seems to improve

when parents are involved in the process.

Contrary to the opinion of some, social behavior does not "happen". It must be taught, according to Black, Downs and Kain (1988), through a systematic program not extemporaneously or haphazzardly. The authors describe a number of key social skills which includes following instructions, and accepting criticism and consequences.

Social issues must be addressed because they will not go away. Carter and Sugai (1988) suggest providing instruction, practice and feedback. Instruction should include modeling, rehearsal, reinforcement, prompting and coaching. Research seems to indicate that reinforcement is necessary for a while after the training program is done.

DeVries and Kohlberg (1987) concur that social skills taught early must be reinforced. Although of the three preschool classes observed, the Montessori class yielded the fewest cases of misconduct, within six weeks after entering a new class, observers saw no observable difference in behavior. They make clear that learning social skills is not a "one shot deal".

Story telling is recommended by Smith (1986)

because stories help set the stage for prosocial behavior. Children learn prosocial behavior from stories, get a better feeling about themselves, and learn what human relations are all about. They learn that as they grow they must become more responsible.

Taking a somewhat different view, Madden (1988) says that reward systems that include praise, teach a disheartening message to children. Children are lead to believe that the teacher is not objective. While attempting to control behavior, ostensibly preventing children from controlling their own lives, the teacher often transmits the wrong message. In contrast, encouragement helps children develop a positive concept of themselves irrespective of the teacher's judgement about them.

Driscoll & Hitz (1988, July) also explain that statements of praise may not be consistent with the goals of early childhood education. A positive self-concept, autonomy, self-reliance and motivation are not fostered by teacher comments that encourage conformity or the desire to please.

Thinking along the same line, Brophy (1981) suggests

that praise emphasizes external rewards. Internal motivation should be encouraged. It is better to encourage than to judge the child.

Gartrell (1987) discourages teachers from employing "assertive discipline" techniques with children. Teachers should avoid the negative approach to teaching social skills and use a problem solving approach. The teacher should teach the appropriate behavior rather than punish the inappropriate. Specific instruction in the problem solving method should replace punitive measures. Public ridicule should be eliminated from the teaching process.

A positive role model approach is suggested by Glasser (1965) rather than punitive discipline. He suggests communicating disapproval through other means, and discussing appropriate behavior with the children. The child must be taught how to solve social problems, not punished because he or she cannot solve them.

A reasonable argument against use of the " time out" chair as a means of improving the social behavior of young children is provided by Clewett (1988). "The chair" teaches the child that it is better to conform than to have an

original thought or action. Children learn to expect to be punished for "thinking". Educators should consider discipline as the teaching of prosocial skills in lieu of punishing children for inappropriate forms of behavior. The teacher should teach the children individually and in small groups how to solve social problems.

Neisworth, Peters & Yawkey (1985) offer a simplistic approach in stating that there are only two general rules in managing behavior that pervade all situations. The most important guideline is "consistency" in the use of behavior management methods, and the second is that children learn through modeling. Considering this, the teacher should provide prompts and minimize rules. It is best when the teacher anticipates poor behavior. Classroom structure is an effective tool for pre-empting anti-social behavior. When punitive measures are felt necessary, the child must perceive the relationship between his behavior and the punishment. It is better, however, to reinforce desired behavior than to punish inappropriate behavior.

Three general types of classroom structure that affect social behavior are described by Althouse (1981). The

first is so "highly structured" that children must conform with no opportunity for independence. Here, children feel like a "pawn on a chess board". Success potential is limited. In the second setting, there is "no structure or guidance" so they become insecure. Aggression often follows. In the third classroom children have "freedom with control". Here the children develop independence and become skilled at decion making.

Isenberg (1987) speaks to the "lasting effects" on social behavior from developmentally inappropriate programs for preschool children. Antisocial behavior of teenagers, including drug abuse, dropout, delinquency, etc., has often been linked to developmentally inappropriate programs.

It seemed reasonable to conclude that while the controversy over the appropriateness of teaching social skills to preschoolers may continue into the future, it was clear that much could be accomplished with 3-6 year old children in helping them acquire the essential social skills necessary to assimilate the cultural values of the mainstream of our society.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

The development of prosocial skills is essential for success in school. The goal of the practicum was: The children at the day care center where the practicum is implemented will display appropriate prosocial behavior without prompting from others.

Behavioral Objectives

The two areas of concentration for the achievement of objectives in the implementation of the practicum were behavior displayed and language usage. During the eight months of implementation of the practicum, in the area of behavior displayed, the objectives were:

1. Children will enter ongoing activities without disruption.
2. Children will resolve conflict through negotiation.
3. Children will exit activities without disruption.
4. Children will share equipment and toys.
5. Children will wait until it is their turn to speak.

In the area of language usage, the objectives were:

6.Children will refrain from foul or abusive language.

7.Children will use the terms, " May I"; " Please"; "Excuse me"; "Thank you"; " You're welcome"; "I'm sorry"; appropriately.

Standands of Performance

The following standards of performance were used to measure the behavioral expectations during the eight months of implementation of the practicum:

31 out of 42 children will demonstrate appropriate behavior in each of the seven objectives in at least 3/4 of their attempts.

Assessment Instruments

During the eight months of implementation of the practicum, a teacher observation checklist was used to measure the standards of performance of the children for the seven objectives selected.

The instrument used was a modified version of the checklist suggested by Mandell and Johnson (1988) cited earlier (see Appendix C for Mandell & Johnson

checklist). The 15 objectives suggested were replaced with the seven objectives selected for the practicum. Only the child's performance and comments (if needed) were recorded after each observation. Appropriate behavior yielded a "+" and inappropriate a "-". One checklist sheet was used for each of the 42 students. It should be noted that only "conflict resolution" yielded two scores for each observation. One score was for appropriate behavior (objective #2) and one for language use (objective #6) (see Appendix D for Teacher Observation Checklist).

Plans for Analyzing Results

When the observations were completed, a summary of scores was made listing each of the seven objectives and the number of children who have been successful in at least three out of four observations (e.g., 39/42 children were successful at least three out of four times for an objective) (See Appendix D for Teacher Observation Checklist Summary Sheet.)

A log was maintained to record any changes in the original plan, with an explanation of why such changes were deemed necessary.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Possible Solutions

Today it is not unusual to read in the newspaper or be told by a teacher that discipline in the schools is very poor. Children display inappropriate behavior and employ anti-social means to resolve conflicts. To some this is confusing. They ask why children simply will not behave. While the answer may be complex and there may be many reasons why children will not "simply behave", in many situations the children do not behave in a prosocial manner because they are not conversant with the mode of behavior that is practiced by the society outside of their home or community.

Few would disagree that success in school at any level is contingent upon awareness and practice of prosocial behavior. Time spent preventing or stopping fights, correcting inappropriate, foul or abusive language, redistributing teaching materials among children who will not share, etc., would best be spent in the development

of cognitive skills. If the teacher could assume with a high level of confidence that the children were in a state of readiness to receive instruction, the teacher could then plan to execute a teaching lesson with content appropriate for 30, or so, minutes of instruction. This, unfortunately, and too often, is not the case. Teachers complain, even at the primary level, that they must spend an inordinate amount of time imposing punitive measures for anti-social behavior. This is neither cost effective nor instructionally efficient, not to mention the waste of time, effort and opportunity to teach and learn that is lost. For many, the loss of time and opportunity for skill acquisition is lost forever with commensurate life long penalties. It is incumbent upon parents and educators to improve the situation described here.

Literature reviewed earlier (DeVries & Kohlberg 1987) indicates that because reinforcememt is essential even after a program of instruction is completed, it will probably be necessary for attention to be paid to anti-social behavior in all of the grades. If, however, the necessary social skills were acquired before regular

schooling begins, then the amount of time spent in this area could be greatly reduced, thereby leaving time open for more appropriate instruction. It is this thinking that lead to the practicum proposed here, which was to teach prosocial skills to preschool children at a private day care center.

In the review of the literature several perspectives were exposed. Innocenti and Schulze (1989) say that children learn social skills either at home or from other children. Hatch (1987) observed children learning social skills from peer interaction. Levine (1987) indicates that children learn social skills from peers in the absence of parental teaching. Chafel (1984), however, says children learn from other children only when they are uncertain about proper behavior. Schindler (1987), in contrast, indicates that it is the class structure that determines social development. Children learn social skills best in an environment free of punitive and judgemental adults, according to Golden's (1987) observations. Other observations by Ditchburn (1988) reveal that day care children learn social skills with even minimal adult

intervention. Curtis (1987) notes that children learn social skills from the family prior to starting school. Eastman (1989), adds that most social learning begins at about age three. Goffin (1987) agrees that much social learning takes place prior to entering school. Glasser (1965) recommends teaching social skills through learning to solve social problems. Gartrell (1987) says social skills are learned best even by young children through the problem solving process. Clewett (1987) further recommends social skills be taught through direct instruction. Peters (1985) describes modeling as the best method for teaching social skills. Bryant and Budd (1984) describe sharing as the quintessential social skill. Rogers (1985) found block play to be an effective medium for children to learn prosocial skills. He recommends group play for learning social skills through interpersonal interaction and parallel play for learning social skills through observation and imitation.

Description of Selected Solution

The aquisition and practice of prosocial skills is an essential element for successful interpersonal

interactions in a society. For children to complete their education in this country devoid of an understanding of even the most basic of these critical skills is not only a travesty for the children, but a serious indictment of the educational system. While schools do many things, that which the schools seem to do best is teach skills. The solution selected for the practicum involved the methods that have been proven to be most successful in the instructional process in general, and specifically, with young children attempting to learn prosocial skills.

Among the methods selected were: providing a reason for expected behavior; direct instruction; practicing; prompting; modeling; reviewing; structuring the environment; large group instruction; small group instruction; individualized instruction and encouragement.

Each of the seven objectives to be taught were considered a separate problem, through which the problem solving process could be employed. The teachers were given a written sample of each problem (objective) with a sample solution and process. These were used as an example of how to handle each problem (see Appendix G

for examples of lessons for each objective). The following is an explanation of each of the methods employed in the implementation of the practicum:

1. Providing a reason for expected behavior: It was explained to the children that most people want to be liked and accepted by others. If people act properly, others will enjoy their company and friendship, and want to play with them. To act properly is the first step in creating friendships.
2. Direct instruction: The children were told how to behave and what to say in each of the seven problem situations presented to them. The proper language and conduct were described with at least one example of each. They were given an opportunity to make comments, ask questions and be given explanations so that there was complete understanding of the desired behavior.
3. Practicing: After a description and demonstration of the desired behavior, every child in each group was selected for demonstrating the desired behavior to the other children. Each group

observed approximately 10 examples of prosocial behavior for each of the seven problem situations. During the week there were structured situations to allow more practice and observations of appropriate behavior.

4. Prompting: Children were prompted and given other reminders at appropriate times as needed. Prompting was more frequent during the initial instructional periods and most infrequent during final periods.

5. Modeling: At all times and in all situations it was presumed that the teacher was a positive role model of prosocial behavior, loving care and genuine concern for children. The teacher also served as a role model at specific times during the process of instruction of prosocial skills. This was necessary especially at the start of the program before children could serve as role models.

6. Reviewing: This essential component was accomplished in several ways. When each problem was introduced, the children observed every

child attempting the desired behavior with the appropriate instructions from the teacher. One week was spent on each problem. After each of the problems had been taught and practiced for one week, the entire process was repeated in a modified form. During the course of the practicum the seven problems (objectives) had been repeated at least four times for one week each.

7. Structuring the environment: Activities and the use of materials were planned so that the children had the opportunity to observe others who practiced prosocial behavior, and so that the teachers had the opportunity to observe the children's behavior.It was reported in the literature that play with large blocks provides opportunity for individual and group activity, and promotes prosocial behavior (Rogers, 1985). Block play was used accordingly, as needed.
8. Large group instruction (LGI): It required seven weeks to complete one cycle of instruction. For the first three cycles (21 weeks) LGI was used.

9. Small group instruction: During the fourth cycle small group instruction was used for those children who demonstrated difficulty remembering appropriate behavior without prompting.
10. Individualized instruction: During the last sequence the teachers used a one-on-one method for those children who had yet to demonstrate prosocial behavior without prompting.
11. Encouraging: In acknowledging effort and progress, the center of interest was on the child rather than the teacher. Children were not told that the teacher is pleased, it makes the teacher happy, or the teacher is proud, all because of student effort or success. Children were told that they have made progress; they are trying hard; they remembered appropriate behavior; and they can be proud of their performance, etc.

Throughout the implementation of the practicum the teachers followed the following sequence. On the first day of the week, the children were presented with a problem to be solved. The problem corresponded to the

first objective. After a discussion, the children role played so that each had the opportunity to practice appropriate behavior for the solution of the problem. Each child observed others behaving appropriately, and each had the opportunity to practice the desired behavior. During each of the next four days, the teacher observed how the children responded to the problem situations they had rehearsed. Appropriate assistance was given in the form of instruction. Inappropriate behavior was not met with punishment or reprimand. During the next seven weeks, in a similar fashion, each of the objectives was presented in the form of problems to be discussed and solved by the children. During the second cycle, the procedures were repeated with no planned changes. Modifications were made at the individual teacher's discretion. The teachers varied the description of the problem situations or created their own stories to meet the needs and interests of the children. The teachers were expected to model the appropriate behavior at least once during the discussion and role playing periods.

During each cycle the teachers recorded the

children's behavior on the observation checklist. Beginning with the fourth cycle the teachers selected those who had not yet demonstrated appropriate behavior to role play during the instruction periods. Additional time was spent working in small groups with those children. At the teachers' discretion, individual attention was given to those with the greatest need for further instruction. Throughout the implementaion period the teachers structured the activity periods so that there was adequate opportunity to observe and record as needed. At the teachers' discretion as soon as it was felt necessary, the parents of those children who were experiencing difficulty learning the desired behavior, were asked to provide additional practice at home in the needed areas. A brief verbal explanation of the program of social skills development was given to all the parents during regular conference periods early in the program.

Report of Action Taken

The following is a report of the action taken on a weekly basis during the implementation of the practicum:

Week 1 (Cycle 1)

Children worked on solving the problems related to entering an ongoing activity, and practicing the related prosocial behavior. Teachers and children demonstrated desired behavior.

Week 2

Resolving conflict

Week 3

Exiting ongoing activity

Week 4

Sharing materials and equipment

Week 5

Waiting one's turn

Week 6

Use of appropriate language

Week 7

Appropriate use of 'Please, thank you,' etc.

Weeks 8-14 (Cycle 2)

The cycle was repeated with modifications

Weeks 15-21 (Cycle 3)

The cycle was repeated with attention to those experiencing difficulty.

Weeks 22-28 (Cycle 4)

The cycle was repeated with teachers selecting those still experiencing problems to demonstrate desired behavior. Teachers began to work with small groups of children who were still having trouble learning the desired behavior.

Weeks 29-35 (Cycle 5)

The cycle was repeated. Teachers provided individual attention as needed. An effort was made to observe children in their regular classroom setting. In the cases in which there was inadequate opportunity to observe a child on any particular skill, the teachers created a role playing situation and used the

results of that observation as a substitue for an observation of the child in a real situation.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The practicum was implemented in order to improve the social skills of young children at a private day care center. Weaknesses and deficiencies in social skills were identified by the teachers through observation of the children's behavior at the day care center. It was felt the problem was that the children at the day care center did not demonstrate that they knew the appropriate social skills necessary to succeed in school. It was felt by the teachers that the desired social behavior practiced at home and in the community were quite disparate from the behavior expected at the day care center. Because of the absence of positive role models of prosocial behavior, the teachers, and children, would have to serve as role models. A review of the literature indicated that, while there may be some who dissent, it appears that children can learn prosocial behavior by direct instruction through a problem solving approach. Model lesson plans were provided to the teachers for the seven objectives selected for the practicum.

Results

The two areas of concentration for the achievement of objectives in the implementaion of the practicum were behavior displayed and language usage. During the eight months of implementation of the practicum, in the area of behavior displayed, the objectives were:

1.Children will enter ongoing activities without disruption.

2.Children will resolve conflicts through negotiation.

3.Children will exit activities without disruption.

4.Children will share equipment and toys.

5.Children will wait until it is their turn to speak.

In the area of language usage, the objectives were:

6.Children will refrain from foul or abusive language.

7.Children will use the terms, "May I"; "Please"; "Excuse me"; "Thank you"; "You're welcome"; "I'm sorry"; appropriately.

The following standards of performance were used to measure the behavioral expectations during the eight months of implementation of the practicum:

31 out of 42 children will demonstrate appropriate

behavior in each of the seven objectives in at least 3/4 of their attempts.

The assessment instrument used was a modified version of the checklist suggested by Mandell and Johnson (1988) cited earlier (see Appendix C for Mandell and Johnson checklist). The 15 suggested objectives were replaced with the seven objectives used in the practicum.

Listed in Table 1 are the total scores of the seven objectives observed and recorded by the teachers.

Table 1

Total Scores for Objectives Observed

Objective:	Children Succeeded:		Observed:
1.Child enters ongoing activity:....	42	/	42
2.Child resolves conflicts.....	23	/	42
3.Child exits ongoing activity.....	42	/	42
4.Child shares equipment.....	40	/	42
5.Child waits turn to speak.....	31	/	42
6.Child refrains from foul language.	31	/	42
7.Child uses 'Please, Thanks,etc....	33	/	42
Total:	242	/	294

Table 1 shows that for each objective, 42 children were observed. The numbers in the left column indicate the number of children who succeeded in that skill. Each child attempted to master seven objectives. The "Total" column indicates (because each child attempted seven objectives) that out of a total of 294 child success opportunities, there were 242 actual successes which reduces to 34/42.

It can be seen that in the total of all observations the goal of 31 out of 42 children successfully demonstrating prosocial behavior, was met or surpassed. In a further examination of the data, however, it is apparent that the success rate in two of the objectives was far less, and was below our target rate. Only 23/42 children were successful in resolving conflicts, and only 31/42 were successful in the use of prosocial language.

There may be several reasons for the low scores on these two objectives. At the time of conflict there is often high emotional involvement by one or both parties. It is much more difficult to display recently learned behavior when emotionally charged, compared to the display

of prosocial behavior while one is calm. The same principle applies to language use. Abusive language is often a first choice of emotionally charged people.

Another reason for a low score on conflict resolution may be that the simulations, or role play, were much more complex and difficult to learn than most of the other objectives.

Also to be considered is the difficulty of arranging realistic simulation regarding conflict resolution. It is difficult to create the emotional climate involved in an actual conflict, especially when the role playing activity is designed to be fun for the children. The same holds true for language use. People usually use foul language in anger while involved in conflict. In both of these objectives, simulation is quite different than reality.

In summary, the goal of improving the social skills of children at a private day care center were met through the implementation of the practicum.

Conclusions

It seems reasonable to presume that a successful program of intervention designed to improve the social

skills of children at a private day care center is quite possible. One may conclude that social skills can be taught to day care children through direct teaching and that role models, and role playing are significant factors in the process.

One may conclude that to learn prosocial skills is not beyond the level of ability of most day care children. The children involved in the practicum implementation were mostly from single parent homes with low socioeconomic resources available to them. There is no indication that children living in more advantaged homes would not fare at least as well as the children in the study. It may be fair to presume that even greater success is possible when there is high parental involvement including positive role models at home, and additional practice and reinforcement at home.

Recommendations

It was clear from the start of the implementation of the practicum that there was a conflict between the social skills practiced outside the day care center and the social skills demanded at the center. This points up the need to

resolve the conflict between home behavior and school behavior as quickly as possible. Parents should be asked to support the school program, practice with their children at home on a regular basis, to facilitate the learning process.

It is recommended that greater time be spent on the skills that are more complex and difficult to simulate and to learn, than on the skills that are less complex and free of emotional charge.

It is also recommended that the teacher be creative in designing role playing activities which are appropriate for a particular group of children.

Dissemination

The methods employed in the implementation of the practicum, and the results will be shared with the members of the cluster. Copies of the lesson plans used to teach the social skills will be made available to the day care centers throughout the county where the practicum was implemented.

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APPENDIX A

List of Children by Age Group

List of Children by Age

Age 3-4 Years = 6 girls & 7 boys

Age 4-5 Years = 6 girls & 6 boys

Age 5-6 Years = 5 girls & 8 boys

Age 6+ Years = 3 girls & 1 boy

Total children= 42

APPENDIX B

Needs Assessment Survey

Needs Assessment Sheet

PLEASE RESPOND BRIEFLY TO THIS QUESTIONNAIRE. WE'D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT YOU FEEL ARE THE MAJOR PROBLEMS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED PROMPTLY, TO PREPARE OUR CHILDREN FOR SCHOOL. (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE, OR 'WRITE IN')

1.PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT: COORDINATION, BALANCE, ETC.

2.SEPARATION FROM PARENTS:

3.PHYSICAL HEALTH: DIET, NUTRITION, ETC.

4.READINESS FOR READING, MATH, ETC.

5.SOCIAL SKILLS: SHARING, WAITING TURN, ETC.

6.CHILD ABUSE: PHYSICAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL

7.SEX ABUSE:

8.OTHERS: (PLEASE LIST OR EXPLAIN ANY OTHER AREAS YOU FEEL ARE OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE)

APPENDIX C

MANDELL & JOHNSON TEACHER OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

3226 Goddard Rd.
Toledo, OH 43606
August 31, 1989

Roger Winer
1021 N.E. 24th Avenue # 16
Pompano Beach, Florida 33062

Dear Roger,

This is to grant permission for you to include a copy of the SOME scale in your practicum paper.

I would be very interested in receiving an abstract of your project.

Best wishes!

Sincerely,

Ruth A. (Johnson) Wilson

Ruth A. Wilson

Figure 1

SOCIAL OBSERVATION FOR MAINSTREAMED ENVIRONMENTS (SOME)

Child's Name: _____ Date: _____

Individual(s) Observing the Child: _____

Individual Observing the Classroom: _____

Other settings in which child was observed _____

Directions: In the first column, mark a plus (+) if the child usually exhibits the behavior, a minus (−) if the child tends not to exhibit the behavior. In the second column, mark a plus if the classroom teacher expects the children to exhibit the behavior, a minus if the behavior is not one of the classroom expectations. Use the third column for noting any related observations or concerns. In the fourth column, write in proposed resolutions to areas of concern; that is, in areas where the behaviors are expected but are not exhibited by the child.

Behavior	*Child's Performance*	*Classroom Expectations*	*Comments*	*Resolution*
1. Asks for help when needed				
2. Plays well with others				
3. Obeys class rules				
4. Attends to task for short periods of time				
5. Completes tasks with minimum adult assistance				
6. Initiates interactions with peers				
7. Initiates interactions with adults				
8. Observes other children				
9. Imitates other children				
10. Makes simple decisions				
11. Practices turn taking				
12. Respects others' belongings				
13. Respects others' feelings				
14. Follows simple directions				
15. Uses verbal vs. nonverbal means to express feelings				
Other _____				
Other _____				

Recommendations: _____

Signatures: _____

APPENDIX D

TEACHER OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

NAME:

OBJECTIVE #:

(RECORD CHILD'S RESPONSE IN EACH AREA)

1.CHILD ENTERS ONGOING ACTIVITY.....

2.CHILD RESOLVES CONFLICTS.....

3.CHILD EXITS ONGOING ACTIVITY.....

4.CHILD SHARES EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS.....

(OFFERS) (ACCEPTS) (REQUESTS)

5.CHILD WAITS TURN TO SPEAK TO OTHERS.....

6.CHILD REFRAINS FROM FOUL OR ABUSIVE LANGUAGE.....

(CONFLICT RESOLUTION)

7.CHILD USES APPROPRIATE TERMS:.....

(PLEASE) (THANK YOU) (EXCUSE ME) (I"M SORRY)

(YOU'RE WELCOME)

APPENDIX E

TEACHER OBSERVATION CHECKLIST SUMMARY SHEET

OBJECTIVE #:	# SUCCEEDED	# OBSERVED
1.CHILD ENTERS ONGOING ACTIVITY:.....	42	/42
2.CHILD RESOLVES CONFLICTS:.....	23	/42
3.CHILD EXITS ONGOING ACTIVITY".....	42	/42
4.CHILD SHARES EQUIPMENT:.....	40	/42
5.CHILD WAITS TURN TO SPEAK:.....	31	/42
6.CHILD REFRAINS FROM FOUL LANGUAGE:....	31	/42
Z7.CHILD USES 'PLEASE, THANKS, ETC:.....	33	/42

NUMBER OF GIRLS SUCCESSFUL IN 3 OUT OF 4 ATTEMPTS =18
NUMBER OF GIRLS BEING OBSERVED =20

NUMBER OF BOYS SUCCESSFUL IN 3 OUT OF 4 ATTEMPTS =13
NUMBER OF BOYS BEING OBSERVED =22

TOTAL NUMBER SUCCESSFUL IN 3 OUT OF 4 ATTEMPTS =31
NUMBER OF CHILDREN BEING OBSERVED =42

APPENDIX F

EXAMPLES OF LESSONS FOR EACH OBJECTIVE

THE FOLLOWING ARE EXAMPLES OF HOW WE SHOULD DISCUSS PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR WITH OUR CHILDREN. THE TEACHER MAY CHANGE THE STORIES AND LEAD THE DISCUSSION IN ANY WAY THAT SEEMS APPROPRIATE. WE WILL CONDUCT THE FORMAL DISCUSSIONS ON THE DAY OF THE WEEK WHEN WE BEGIN TO WORK TOWARD ANOTHER OBJECTIVE. WE SHOULD ENCOURAGE THE CHILDREN TO ASK AS MANY QUESTIONS AS NECESSARY. MUCH OF THE NEEDED INFORMATION MAY COME FROM THE CHILDREN IF WE ASK LEADING QUESTIONS OF THEM. AFTER THE DISCUSSION WE WILL ROLE PLAY WITH THE CHILDREN SO THAT THEY CAN BOTH PRACTICE AND DEMONSTRATE THE DESIRED BEHAVIOR. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE DISCUSS RATHER THAN LECTURE. THE FIRST PERSON TO PLAY A ROLE SHOULD BE THE TEACHER. EVERY CHILD MUST GAIN EXPERIENCE BY ROLE PLAYING. ROLE PLAYING SHOULD BE A LIGHT, ENJOYABLE ACTIVITY.

OBJECTIVE #1: THE CHILDREN WILL ENTER ONGOING ACTIVITIES WITHOUT DISRUPTION.

PROBLEM TO SOLVE: IF OUR FRIENDS ARE PLAYING A GAME AND AND WE WANT TO PLAY TOO, HOW CAN WE GET TO PLAY IN THE GAME IN A NICE WAY?

PROCEDURE: DESCRIBE A TYPICAL PLAY SCENE AND ASK THE CHILDREN TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM. WHAT COULD THEY DO SO THAT THEIR FRIENDS WOULD ALLOW THEM TO JOIN IN THE ACTIVITY? WITH EACH ALTERNATIVE ASK WHAT THE CONSEQUENCES MIGHT BE FOR THAT PARTICULAR SOLUTION, HOW THEY MIGHT FEEL AND HOW THEIR FRIENDS MIGHT FEEL. IN THE ABSENCE OF APPROPRIATE RESPONSES FROM THE CHILDREN, TEACHER SHOULD PROVIDE VIABLE, REALISTIC SUGGESTIONS, AND CONTINUE DISCUSSION.

WHEN IT IS CLEAR THAT THE CHILDREN UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM AND ALTERNATIVES, SUGGEST THAT THE GROUP PLAY A GAME. ENGAGE A FEW CHILDREN IN AN APPROPRIATE ACTIVITY (LEGOS, BLOCKS, ETC.).

ENCOURAGE A VOLUNTEER TO TRY ONE SPECIFIC ALTERNATIVE AS A MEANS OF BEING ACCEPTED INTO THE GAME. DISCUSS THE RESULTS, AND HOW WE EACH FEEL WHEN WE ARE ACCEPTED OR REJECTED BY OUR FRIENDS. DO THIS WITH EACH OF THE ALTERNATIVES AND BE SURE TO INCLUDE EVERY CHILD IN THE ROLE OF THE CHILD TRYING TO ENTER THE GAME. VARY THE STORY IN SUBSEQUENT WEEKS WHEN WORKING ON THIS OBJECTIVE.

OBJECTIVE #2: CHILDREN WILL RESOLVE CONFLICTS THROUGH NEGOTIATING RATHER THAN FIGHTING.

PROBLEM TO SOLVE: A. WHAT CAN WE DO WHEN WE WANT A TOY AND OUR FRIEND WANTS THE SAME TOY?
B. WHAT CAN WE DO WHEN WE WANT TO PLAY ONE GAME AND OUR FRIEND WANTS TO PLAY A DIFFERENT GAME?

PROCEDURE: DESCRIBE AN APPROPRIATE PLAY SCENE THEN ASK THE CHILDREN TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM. WHAT CAN THEY DO OR SAY, SO THAT BOTH THEY AND THEIR FRIEND MAY BE HAPPY? THERE ARE MANY ALTERNATIVES, EACH OF WHICH HAS CONSEQUENCES FOR BOTH CHILDREN. ASK FOR SOME IDEAS AND DISCUSS BOTH PROCEDURE AND CONSEQUENCES RELATED TO THE SOLUTION. FIRST BE CERTAIN THEY UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM. IF NECESSARY ALTER THE PROBLEM SITUATION OR EVEN CREATE A NEW ONE THAT MAY BE MORE RELEVANT TO THEM. AFTER THEY UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM AND ALTERNATIVES, ASK HOW THEY MIGHT FEEL, OR HOW THEIR FRIEND MIGHT FEEL IF A PARTICULAR SOLUTION WERE SELECTED.

THERE ARE TWO CONCEPTS FOR THE CHILDREN TO GRASP: CAUSE AND EFFECT, AND COMPROMISE. LEAD THE DISCUSSION SO THAT 'GIVE AND TAKE' ARE EXPLORED AND UNDERSTOOD, AS WELL AS THE CONSEQUENCES OF EACH SELECTED ALTERNATIVE.

AFTER THE TEACHER IS SATISFIED WITH THE COURSE OF THE DISCUSSION, IT IS TIME TO ROLE PLAY.

THIS SHOULD BE A FUN ACTIVITY WITH PARTICIPATION BY EVERY CHILD. WHILE THEY WILL LEARN FROM WATCHING, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THEY USE THEIR OWN WORDS AND IDEAS SO THAT THERE IS MORE TO BE LEARNED THAN JUST MIMICKING OTHERS. VARY THE STORY IN SUBSEQUENT WEEKS WHEN WORKING ON THIS OBJECTIVE.

OBJECTIVE #3:THE CHILD WILL EXIT ONGOING ACTIVITIES WITHOUT CAUSING DISRUPTION.

PROBLEM TO SOLVE: WHAT CAN WE DO WHEN WE WANT TO LEAVE A GAME WE ARE PLAYING, TO PLAY ANOTHER GAME WITH ANOTHER FRIEND? OR WHEN IT IS TIME TO GO HOME FOR DINNER?

PROCEDURE: DESCRIBE A PLAY SITUATION IN WHICH ONE CHILD GETS UP FROM THE TABLE OR FLOOR AND LEAVES ANOTHER CHILD ALONE TO WONDER WHAT IS GOING ON. ASK HOW THEY WOULD FEEL IF A FRIEND LEFT THEM ALL ALONE TO PLAY WITH ANOTHER CHILD. IT IS IMPORTANT FOR EACH CHILD TO "SEE THE SITUATION THROUGH ANOTHER PERSONS EYES". AFTER THEY SEEM TO UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM AND CAN GAIN THE OTHER PERSON'S PERSPECTIVE ENCOURAGE THEM TO SUGGEST A VARIETY OF ALTERNATIVES. DISCUSS THE ALTERNATIVES AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF EACH. IF APPROPRIATE ALTERNATIVES ARE NOT FORTHCOMING SUGGEST SOME DIALOGUE TO USE THAT SUGGESTS A WARM, TEMPORARY PARTING. "I SURE LIKED PLAYING BLOCKS WITH YOU AND I HOPE WE CAN PLAY MORE TOMORROW. NOW I'D LIKE TO PLAY SOMETHING ELSE." ' I'M SORRY BUT IT'S TIME FOR ME TO GO HOME FOR DINNER. IT WAS FUN PLAYING WITH YOU. CAN WE PLAY AGAIN LATER?' "THAT WAS FUN ! SEE YOU TOMORROW, MARY!" REGARDLESS WHAT WORDS ARE USED APPRECIATION AND RESPECT FOR THE OTHER CHILD'S FEELINGS SHOULD BE EXPRESSED.

AFTER ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES ARE CLEAR TO THE CHILDREN, IT IS TIME TO ROLE PLAY. SET UP AN APPROPRIATE PLAY SITUATION THEN TELL ONE CHILD

HE SHOULD LEAVE THE ACTIVITY NICELY. BE SURE TO ALLOW EVERY CHILD THE OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY THE PART OF THE CHILD WHO LEAVES, AND THE ONE WHO IS LEFT ALONE. UNDERSTANDING ANOTHER'S FEELINGS IS IMPORTANT IN THIS OBJECTIVE.

OBJECTIVE #4: THE CHILDREN WILL SHARE MATERIALS AND TOYS.

PROBLEM TO SOLVE: WHAT CAN WE DO WHEN WE WANT TO PLAY WITH A TOY AND A FRIEND WANTS TO PLAY WITH THE SAME TOY?

PROCEDURE: DISCUSS WITH THE CHILDREN THE REALITY THAT THERE RARELY ARE ENOUGH TOYS OR GAMES AT HOME OR IN SCHOOL FOR EVERYONE TO HAVE THE SAME TYPE OF TOY OR GAME. DESCRIBE A PLAY SITUATION IN WHICH THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH TOYS FOR EVERYONE. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE WAYS WE COULD HANDLE THAT SITUATION? ENCOURAGE THE CHILDREN TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM IN A WAY THAT WILL MAKE EVERYONE HAPPY. THERE ARE ALTERNATIVE COURSES OF ACTION AND CONSEQUENCES FOR EACH. DISCUSS THE PROBLEM, ALTERNATIVES, AND FEELINGS THAT WILL RESULT FROM EACH.

AFTER THE PROBLEM HAS BEEN EXPLORED AND IT IS CLEAR THAT THE CHILDREN UNDERSTAND THE VARIOUS RELATIONSHIPS, IT IS TIME TO ROLE PLAY. SET UP A PLAY SITUATION IN WHICH THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH TOYS FOR EACH CHILD. INCLUDE EVERY CHILD IN THE PLAY SO THAT EACH HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO TRY OUT HIS OWN SOLUTION. THEY SHOULD LEARN THAT TO SHARE WILL YIELD HAPPINESS FOR EACH CHILD. BE SURE TO VARY THE STORY IN SUBSEQUENT WEEKS WHEN WORKING ON THIS OBJECTIVE.

OBJECTIVE #5: CHILDREN WILL WAIT THEIR TURN TO SPEAK TO THE TEACHER OR OTHER CHILDREN.

PROBLEM TO SOLVE: WHAT CAN WE DO WHEN WE HAVE SOMETHING REALLY IMPORTANT TO TELL THE TEACHER BUT SHE IS TALKING TO SOMEONE ELSE?

PROCEDURE: DESCRIBE A SITUATION IN WHICH A CHILD HAS SOMETHING VERY INTERESTING OR IMPORTANT TO TELL THE TEACHER BUT FINDS THAT ANOTHER CHILD IS ENGAGING THE TEACHER. LEAD THE CHILDREN TO BECOME AWARE THAT THERE ARE THREE BASIC RESPONSES, EACH WITH DIFFERENT CONSEQUENCES. ONE MIGHT SIMPLY INTERRUPT THE TEACHER'S CONVERSATION AND BEGIN TO SPEAK. ONE MIGHT WAIT UNTIL THE TEACHER IS FREE. ONE MIGHT EXCUSE ONESELF AND ASK TO SPEAK TO THE TEACHER. THERE ARE CONSEQUENCES TO EACH OF THE THREE TYPES OF RESPONSES, INCLUDING FORGETTING WHAT WE WISH TO TELL THE TEACHER! ENCOURAGE THE CHILDREN TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM IN THEIR OWN WAY SO THAT NO ONE IS OFFENDED. DISCUSS HOW EACH WOULD FEEL IF THEIR CONVERSATION WERE CUT SHORT BY SOMEONE INTERRUPTING. SEEK ALTERNATIVES WITHIN EACH OF THE THREE AREAS THAT WILL YIELD POSITIVE FEELINGS IN THE PEOPLE ENGAGED IN CONVERSATION.

AFTER THE TEACHER BELIEVES THE CHILDREN HAVE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROBLEM SITUATION AND THE ALTERNATIVES IT IS TIME TO ROLE PLAY. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT EVERY CHILD BE GIVEN THE CHANCE TO TRY OUT HIS OR HER OWN WAY OF SOLVING THE PROBLEM. SET UP A SCENE IN WHICH THE TEACHER IS TALKING TO A CHILD AND SOMEONE ELSE WANTS TO SPEAK TO THE TEACHER. MANY CHILDREN WILL ENJOY PLAYING THE TEACHER. "EXCUSE ME BILLY AND MRS. GREEN. MAY I PLEASE TELL YOU SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT? -IS ONE EXAMPLE OF A DESIRABLE SOLUTION. ENCOURAGE THEM TO CREATE THEIR OWN.

OBJECTIVE #6: CHILDREN WILL ABSTAIN FROM FOUL OR ABUSIVE LANGUAGE.

PROBLEM TO SOLVE: WHAT CAN WE DO WHEN SOMEONE DOES SOMETHING TO US THAT MAKES US SO ANGRY THAT WE WANT TO CALL THEM EVERY BAD NAME WE HAVE EVER HEARD, TO SHOW THEM HOW ANGRY THEY HAVE MADE US?

PROCEDURE: THE AREA OF LANGUAGE USAGE MAY BE THE ONE IN WHICH CHILDREN HAVE THE MOST FREQUENT NEGATIVE EXAMPLES. IT IS INCUMBENT UPON US, THEREFORE, TO DEMONSTRATE PROPER LANGUAGE USAGE, AND TO EXPRESS OUR ANGER APPROPRIATELY. TO FEEL ANGER IS NORMAL AND WE NEED TO TELL THAT TO THE CHILDREN. THE EXPRESSION OF ANGER IS ANOTHER MATTER. WE NEED TO LEARN HOW TO EXPRESS ANGER IN A WAY THAT AFFORDS US THE OPPORTUNITY TO CHANGE THE SITUATION THAT CAUSED THE ANGER. EXPLAIN TO THE CHILDREN THAT TO CALL A NAME TO ANOTHER PERSON DOES NOT TELL THAT PERSON WHAT THEY DID TO ANNOY US. IT DOES NOT TELL THEM HOW WE FEEL, OR WHY WE THINK THEY HAVE BEEN UNFAIR. IT DOES NOT AFFORD THE OTHER PERSON THE OPTION TO DEFEND THEIR ACTIONS OR EXPLAIN WHY THEY MAY NOT BE WRONG. TO INSULT THE OTHER PERSON MAKES US THE JUDGE AND JURY WITHOUT THE BENEFIT OF HEARING ALL OF THE EVIDENCE.

DESCRIBE A PLAY SITUATION IN WHICH SEVERAL CHILDREN ARE PLAYING AND A THIRD CHILD BUMPS INTO THEM. ASK EACH CHILD WHAT THEY MIGHT DO. AMONG THE ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS MIGHT BE TO ASK THE PERSON WHY THEY BUMPED INTO US. ENCOURAGE THEM TO PROVIDE ALTERNATIVES AND DISCUSS THE CONSEQUENCES OF EACH. EXPLAIN THAT SOMEONE MAY HAVE PUSHED THE OTHER PERSON OR THEY MAY HAVE TRIPPED OVER THE BROOM. BE SURE TO INCLUDE SOME DISCUSSION ABOUT HOW THE OTHER CHILD MIGHT FEEL IF SOMEONE PUSHED HIM; THEN HIS BEST FRIEND CALLED HIM A NAME FOR BUMPING HIM. THEY NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT THEY SHOULD FIRST GET ADEQUATE INFORMATION ABOUT WHY SOMETHING HAPPENED, THEN IF APPROPRIATE, THEY NEED TO COMMUNICATE TO THE OTHER PERSON HOW THEY FEEL AND WHY THEY ARE ANNOYED WITH THAT PERSON.

AFTER THE TEACHER BELIEVES THE CHILDREN HAVE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROBLEM SITUATION AND THE ALTERNATIVES, IT IS TIME TO ROLE PLAY. SET UP A PLAY SITUATION IN WHICH SEVERAL

CHILDREN ARE PLAYING IN A CIRCLE. CREATE A DISTRACTION, LIKE A BALL ROLLING INTO THE GAME. LET THE CHILDREN 'ACT THEIR WAY OUT' OF THE SITUATION ACCORDING TO THE NEW IDEAS THEY LEARNED IN THE DISCUSSION. WE ARE LOOKING FOR THE ATTEMPT TO GAIN MORE INFORMATION, THEN, IF APPROPRIATE, COMMUNICATION THAT EXPRESSES THEIR DISPLEASURE AND THE CAUSE.

WE WILL NEED TO REMEMBER THAT THE CHILDREN WILL BE WATCHING US TO LEARN HOW WE HANDLE OUR OWN ANGER AND DISPLEASURE. ABOVE ALL WE NEED TO SET A GOOD EXAMPLE OF PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR FOR THEM. IT IS LIKELY THAT THEY WILL LEARN MORE BY OBSERVING US THAN FROM WHAT WE TELL THEM TO DO.

OBJECTIVE #7: THE TERMS 'PLEASE, THANK YOU, EXCUSE ME, YOU'RE WELCOME, I'M SORRY,' WILL BE USED APPROPRIATELY.

PROBLEM TO SOLVE: HOW DO WE TELL SOMEONE WE ARE VERY PLEASED BECAUSE THEY DID SOMETHING FOR US, OR THAT WE FEEL BADLY ABOUT SOMETHING WE MIGHT HAVE DONE TO THEM?

PROCEDURE: FOR THIS OBJECTIVE WE WILL USE SEVERAL PROBLEM SITUATIONS BECAUSE WE HAVE SEVERAL TERMS TO USE. AFTER DESCRIBING A SITUATION IN WHICH ONE CHILD HAS SOMETHING THAT THE OTHER WANTS- LIKE CANDY, ASK THEM HOW WE ASK FOR SOME. IF NONE SUGGESTS 'PLEASE', TELL THEM THE CORRECT ANSWER. IN THE SAME SITUATION, HOW DO WE EXPRESS APPRECIATION FOR OUR FRIEND GIVING US A PIECE OF THE CANDY? IF NONE SUGGESTS 'THANK YOU', TELL THEM WE SAY 'THANK YOU' TO SHOW APPRECIATION.

DESCRIBE A SITUATION IN WHICH A CHILD MUST GO TO A CLOSET TO GET SOMETHING FOR THE TEACHER BUT SOMEONE IS IN THEIR PATH BLOCKING ACCESS TO THE CLOSET. ASK THEM HOW WE REQUEST THAT THEY MOVE OUT OF OUR WAY, SO THAT WE SHOW RESPECT FOR THEM AND FOR THEIR RIGHT TO BE DOING WHAT

THEY ARE DOING. IF NO ONE SUGGESTS 'EXCUSE ME', TELL THEM THE ANSWER.

DESCRIBE A SITUATION IN WHICH A CHILD THROWS A BALL THAT ACCIDENTALLY HITS ANOTHER PERSON. ASK THE CHILDREN HOW WE TELL THE VICTIM THAT WE DID NOT HIT THEM DELIBERATELY WITH THE BALL. IF NONE SUGGESTS "I'M SORRY', TELL THEM THAT WE USE' I'M SORRY' TO EXPRESS REGRET.

IN THIS SCENARIO DESCRIBE TWO SITUATIONS WHERE A CHILD SHARES A CANDY BAR WITH A FRIEND. IN ONE SITUATION THE RECEIVING CHILD SAYS 'THANK YOU' TO SHOW HER GRATITUDE AND IN THE OTHER SITUATION THE RECEIVER SIMPLY WALKS AWAY WITH NO COMMENT AT ALL. ASK THE CHILDREN TO EXPRESS HOW THEY WOULD FEEL IN EACH CASE. ASK WHAT THEY THINK MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE TO SAY WHEN THEY FEEL GOOD BECAUSE THE RECEIVER SHOWED APPRECIATION. IF NONE SUGGESTS "YOU'RE WELCOME', TELL THEM THAT WE SAY 'YOU'RE WELCOME' TO THANK THE RECEIVER FOR BEING POLITE AND SHOWING APPRECIATION.

AFTER THE TEACHER IS SATISFIED THAT THE PROBLEMS DISCUSSED AND ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS ARE UNDERSTOOD BY THE CHILDREN, IT IS TIME TO ROLE PLAY. SET UP SOME SIMPLE PLAY SITUATIONS IN WHICH EACH CHILD WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO USE THE APPROPRIATE TERMS TO EXPRESS THEIR FEELINGS PROSOCIALLY.

BECAUSE THERE ARE SEVERAL PROBLEMS SITUATIONS TO EXPLORE WITH THE CHILDREN, THE TEACHER MAY ELECT TO DEMONSTRATE AND PRACTICE EACH AT A DIFFERENT TIME. GROUP DYNAMICS AND TEACHER DISCRETION SHOULD DETERMINE THIS DECISION.

WE MAY BE THE ONLY ROLE MODEL FOR PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR THAT OUR CHILDREN WILL SEE. LET'S REMEMBER THAT THE CHILDREN ARE LEARNING FROM WATCHING US!